

The Mysterious Ways of Wang Foo By Sidney C. Partridge

The Cloisonne Vase.

MIDNIGHT had just struck from the great clock on the tower of the Shanghai customs house, when flames were discovered bursting out from the huts of the opposite side of the river. They were so dangerously near the foreign signal station that the U. S. S. Shenandoah—fortunately close at hand at the customs buoy—sent a boat crew ashore to assist in putting them out. They were just in time, for the railing around the signal staff was already on fire and the signal man was climbing down his ladder with his few worldly belongings in his arms. The sailors quickly organized a bucket-brigade and succeeded in extinguishing the conflagration before any further damage was done to the customs property, but not before half a dozen native huts had been destroyed.

Lieut. Gleason, in charge of the party, did what he could to quiet down the excited villagers, who were rushing hither and thither, shouting and screaming at the top of their voices, but it was not until a police boat appeared on the scene that anything like order was restored. The native sergeants, armed with clubs and long bamboo staffs, drove the crowd back from the signal station and threatened them in their own dialect with every kind of punishment if they did not instantly retire.

The women seemed more difficult to manage than the men. They were frantically dragging their children about by the arms and while trying to save their few household goods were screaming out the names of those who were lost in the smoke. In the midst of the confusion an old man suddenly arose—no one seemed to see or know where he came from—and, holding an old glass bottle aloft, cried out, as he poured the contents of it on the last burning shack, "Tien ping ching sui! Tien su hsi di hwo!" (The crystal stream from the heavenly vase! The water of heaven quenches the fires of earth!). His words were like magic in their effect. The villagers quieted down and even the native soldiers and policemen regarded him with awe and allowed him to empty the bottle in peace. To be sure, there wasn't very much "fire of earth" left for his "water from heaven" to quench, but what there was did its duty most effectively, as far as the native mind was concerned, and that was the all-important thing for the moment.

It was far more satisfactory to them than the yellow water of the Wang Poo—or even the puffing efforts of the English fire engine from the Settlement, which had once crossed the river—and, as their flowery language expressed it, "The charm of the heavenly liquid had dampened the ardor of the fire-god," and all was well.

A few evenings later Lieut. Gleason and some of his brother officers from the Shenandoah were dining at the American consulate, when the conversation turned upon the incident of the burning village, and he related the appearance of the old man and the magic bottle.

"I've heard a great deal about their curious native ideas and superstitions," he said to Mrs. Cortelyou, the consul's wife, "but this is the very first time I have seen them practically illustrated. I don't know who the old chap was—though my cabin-boy tells me he was the head of the village, or something of that kind—but he certainly had them in his power, all right. Why, they had more faith in that quart of holy water than in all our ship's fire-buckets."

"They must have the same charm over them that the medicine men have over our Indians in South Dakota," replied Mrs. Cortelyou. "My husband was attached to one of the Army posts there as surgeon, years ago, and he says many of my houseboys' stories remind him exactly of his experience among the redmen."

"I wonder if you would mind calling the boy in for a moment; I am curious to ask him a question or two. The truth is, this thing grows more interesting and mysterious every day, and I am anxious to find out more about it."

"Why, most certainly," as she laid her hand upon the table bell.

"Boy, you can savvée that Hwang Poo fire last week?"

"My can savvée."

"Who b'longes that one piece old man pour bottle water that fireside?"

"B'longee villagee number one head man, catchee long white beard."

"All same joss man?"

"No all samee—he have buy dat water joss house side, velly good putchee out fire."

"You can savvée what side that joss house makes sell?"

"My no can savvée. 'Spose you talkee cook, he can savvée; my b'longee Nink Poo man, no can savvée Shanghai joss."

"They evidently do not worship the same divinity in these two places," interrupted the consul, "and their local jealousies are such that no one of them will give any information about the other."

"I suppose it would mean a row in my kitchen during the dish-washing," said his wife, "if the Ning Poo house boy cast any reflections upon—or revealed any of the secrets of—the temples of the Shanghai idols."

"Perhaps so; religious rivalries have certainly caused us a good deal of trouble in the world before this. Why, when we were on the Indian station, we used to hear of them almost every day at the Bombay Club. Don't you remember what they told us there, Watkins?"—turning to his brother officer.

"The British government certainly has a merry time keeping them from jumping at each others' throats," replied the genial Watkins.

"Well, I suppose we shall have to drop the subject there, for it would never do for the navy to sow the



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right next to the tea go-down with thousands of chests of the new crop stored in it."

In accordance with his chief's instructions, Morehead summoned the two cleverest local detectives to his office and instructed them to go across the river and stay until they found out exactly what the cause of the fire was.

After a week's wandering around from village to village and indirect inquiries addressed to boatmen and coolies at the little tea-stands, where they appeared in the guise of poor students seeking recreation, they returned with a very interesting story. This was the gist of it; the two villages of Hal Ka Doo and Lo Ka Doo, situated on either side of the foreign signal station, had been for many years rivals in ferrying farmers and other country folk across the river in their sampans.

The recent wreck of a junk, how-

ever, had turned a current of the stream so that the little wharf of the south side was no longer available and the line of passengers on foot now all passed to the north. This started the trouble and it wasn't very long before one night an attacking party, led on by four old grandmas, each over sixty years of age (which secures immunity from Chinese law), proceeded with baskets of decayed vegetables from the southern village to the northern and began to hurl them right and left at the heads of their rivals, shrieking as they did so, "Tao liao wo tik fan wan! Tao liao wo tik fan wan!" (You have overturned our rice-bowl! You have overturned our rice-bowl!). The northern village waited a week or more before deciding upon the best and most effective way of returning this celestial compliment and finally took the advice of a famous fortune teller on the Shanghai side. He bade them proceed at night to the twin graves of the southern village's fathers and "stop up the spirit holes." This would prevent their spirits from getting out of the graves at night and going wandering about, and they would wreak their vengeance on their own people by sending the children smallpox or contracting with the god of thunder to hurl his bolts at them.

When the residents of Hal Ka Doo found out that this awful insult had been actually offered to the spirits of their dead, their anger knew no bounds and proceeding to the Temple of the God of Fire they purchased several bundles of joss-sticks, which they soaked in kerosene oil and then from time to time hurled them into the thatched roofs of the northern village—hence the three-fold conflagrations of which the inspector spoke.

"Well," said the English officer to his two Chinese assistants, after they had finished their explanation, "what can be done to stop a repetition of it? How long are they going to keep on setting each others' houses on fire? That's the point that interests me."

"S'pose you secrete twenty pieces joss-man, pay he twenty dollar, gives number one Chinese feaste, pay twenty dollar more—ahce gedder forty dollar. Chinaman takee Pei Lee, he have savee face, all proper, no more fightee, can do."

"So you mean to tell me that the small sum of forty Mexicans, expended on a native feast and on hiring a lot of those dirty, ragged priests to burn joss-sticks will make the proper apology and adjustment and prevent any more fires on that side of the river?"

"My thinkee can do."

"By jove! It would be worth the

customs' while to pay it just to protect their property," replied Mr. Morehead, as he closed the interview.

The little Temple of the Sacred White Stag was situated south of the extreme end of the English settlement and just outside the international boundary line. This made it very convenient for its devotees to visit it and sip their native wine in its courts and settle their little native disputes without any interference from the foreign police, whose views on the drinking and gambling and fighting question were known to be somewhat severe. It consisted of the usual three courts with the surrounding sheds and in front of the inner shrine was the figure of the white stag bearing aloft on his interlocked horns a handsome vase of old Peking cloisonne. Over him were large tablets with these words upon them: "His flesh is food! His horns are medicine! His tears are pearls!"

It was commonly reported that business was not as thriving at the temple as it used to be, and that the income of the priests was steadily falling off. To be sure, two years ago there had been a sudden miracle and the Sacred Stag had been discovered shedding his tears of pearls and these had been retailed at a high price to the worshippers as panaceas for all bodily ills, but this had lasted only a few short weeks and now it was becoming necessary again to appeal to the miraculous to replenish the temple coffers. This state of things accounted for the secret meeting of the five old priests one evening with "Old Nine Spot," the abbot, presiding. A shrewd businesslike figure he was, bending over the tea-stand and smoking his little pipe: his shining bald head revealing most clearly the three rows of the nine burnings of the moxa at the time of his taking his vows.

"Brethren of the order," he said, "the time has come for serious action. The cash boxes are lower than they ever were before—a miracle alone can save us. What shall it be?"

"Well," replied Brother Two, "it must be something new and striking. Our people are not as easily attracted now as they were before the foreigners came. Let us take time and do it well."

"Our Sacred White Stag has wept his pearls and shed his horns and cast his teeth," said Brother Three, "let him now do something different from them all. I have thought over it long and carefully and I have outlined the great miracle in my mind—will you hear it?"

"Our listening ears bend toward thee in the pledge of secrecy," they all answered as in one voice.

"The precious relic of the Dukes of Loo which our Sacred Stag bears aloft upon his horns is supposed to contain the very dew of heaven, is it not? As the Book of Poetry says, 'Heaven's crystal waters glisten on his branches.' Well, let the vase of cloisonne overflow in a perpetual stream and as the waters fall into the bronze basin at his feet, let us catch them in little bottles of glass and sell them for the cure of all diseases. Believe me, this will be the grandest investment we have ever made."

"It sounds most attractive," said Old Nine Spot, "but how will your plan be carried out? How will you keep the vase always full and overflowing so that the people do not suspect the truth?"

"It can be done in a new and very wonderful way, but—" and here he hesitated—"we—we shall need help from some one that is without."

"From without?" they all cried in unison.

"Yes, without that it is quite impossible."

"But can he be pledged to eternal secrecy?"

"He divulges one word on the penalty of his life!"

"Shall we accept the plan of Brother Three?" inquired the abbot.

All rose, and, slowly and reverently bowing, gave the mystic signal of assent by raising the right hand and moving it through the air in three interlocking circles. The meeting over, they dispersed to the several duties of the night.

Brother Three was very busy for the next few weeks, coming and going from the temple at all hours of the day and night. Old Bon Lee, the egg-peddler, who lived in the mat shed opposite the temple gate, thought he saw him always choose the nights that were particularly dark and stormy for his trips to town—and sometimes he thought he saw him bring a mysterious looking stranger with him—but he knew the priests well enough to realize that they were not like ordinary beings, and as his position at the gate depended upon their favor, he did not question their doings or talk of them to strangers—except just once to a stranger who kindly bought all his eggs for the day and asked him many questions about the coming and going of the priests and who came there to visit them. He had seemed like a visitor from another province, for he spoke the local tongue with difficulty, and his dress was different from the dress of those who daily passed by the temple gates. But old Bon-Lee's memory was getting feeble now, and he forgot all about the stranger in a few passing days.

Just across the line from the Temple of the Sacred White Stag, and inside the border of the English settlement, was the modest little home of Johnson the Eurasian. He was an interesting member of that large class in every eastern port which occupies the middle position between the two races represented in their parentage, but who, at the same time, seem to be socially ostracized by both. He had been formerly attached to the staff of one of the Shanghai newspapers, where his knowledge of both peoples and of both tongues made him valuable, but he had been driven off by the jealousy of some of the Chinese employees, and since then he had been glad to earn a few odd dollars by almost anything that offered itself.

On the particular evening in question he was entertaining two native visitors in his little parlor, where all the doors and windows were securely sealed and the air was filled with the odor of smoking tea and incense. One was Mr. Hop Tuk, the magistrate of the Chinese district immediately opposite, and the other was none other

seeds of disorder in the consular staff, but I am on the track now of that joss-house and, as it says, you know, under the picture of the little boy reaching for the cake of soap: "I won't be happy till I get it."

When the party broke up and Lieut. Gleason was being sculled back in a sampan to the ship, he had definitely made up his mind to solve three problems, viz.: (1) Where was the mysterious temple that sold the firewater? (2) What was the heavenly vase from which flowed the crystal stream? (3) How could he get his hands on some of the precious liquid? He only hoped that the Shenandoah would stay at the buoy long enough for him to solve them. His little cabin already contained a number of very rare and interesting curios collected on the cruise. Buddhas and idols innumerable were there, but they had all been bought on hearsay evidence as to their merits—here was something that he had actually seen the working of—the more he thought of it the more he longed for a glimpse of the "heavenly vase of the crystal stream" and the more positively he made up his mind that he must have it, even if it took the last Mexican dollar on his pay check.

In the meantime, the burned-out villagers were preparing to rebuild in their very humble way, but before anything whatever could be touched they had to give the usual theatrical exhibition in honor of Kwa Sheng, the fire god. It was his anger that had been aroused and in consequence of this he had thrown his burning torch in their midst, and now it was necessary to drop the subject there, for it would never do for the navy to sow the

next thing you know that village on the south will catch fire and that's

than our friend Brother Three. They were engaged in a most absorbing conversation and evidently were discussing a plan of deep interest to every one of them. The words "dollars," "cash," "price of a bottle," etc., could be easily detected. Finally the magistrate arose to leave.

"Gentlemen" he said, "500 taels must be positively guaranteed me as my reward for the official protection of the miracle—not a cash less will I accept. Pledge it to me now and I will be as silent as the Buddhas of stone and permit no one to trouble you. If you refuse to agree to this, my soldiers will allow the mob to wreck the temple, just as soon as they think they are being deceived, and the reputation of the great White Stag will be forever ruined."

"Tis a very high price to demand of the poor priests," answered Brother Three; "make it 400 and we will sign the paper now."

"No! Not a cash less, though the evil angel smite me. You call yourselves 'poor priests'; why, you will be rolling in riches before the moon is full, and eating and feasting like princes. Come! Five hundred now—or nothing. What do you say?"

The other two participants withdrew into the corner of the room, where the magistrate could not hear them, and spent some moments in a heated discussion, which finally ended in their bringing forth a roll of yellow paper and a little box of seals, which they placed upon the table.

"And how much down?" asked the priest.

"One hundred down is the very lowest," replied the officer.

Out of an old and greasy girdle came forth a roll of bank notes and a hundred taels were counted over and a receipt therefor signed and sealed—the remainder to be paid on the first of each succeeding month. Hop Tuk passed out into the darkness and the Eurasian and the native continued their preparations for the miracle.

"You are quite sure about the pipes? Two weeks will complete the line?"

"That is ample time if the nights are good and dark. We must work very carefully and slowly while the foreign police are on the settlement patrol. If they should catch us, all would be lost."

"You can trust me absolutely—every foot will be laid with my own hands, and I know just the hour the patrolman passes the corner. Beyond

the line, you know, he dare not go."

"Two weeks—two weeks to lay the pipes," repeated Brother Three to himself, as he sipped his tea. Suddenly he started, for the old servant, who had quietly entered the room, was bending over him with the boiling teakettle in his hand, ready to fill the bowls. He looked as blank and innocent as the wooden idol that stood upon the mantel, but he might have overheard, he might have overheard. No; impossible. The suspicion vanished as soon as it came and the old priest returned to his roll of bedding in the temple bunk, assuring himself that all was well.

By the fifteenth day of the coming moon all would be ready for "The prodigy of heaven;" the Sacred White Stag and the Cloisonne vase would bring un-

told blessings to all subscribers and the temple funds would run up into the thousands! So thinking and planning he fell asleep and dreamed of the golden palace of Kwei Shen, the god of riches.

Wang Foo, the Man of Mystery, from Hongkong, was simply making a social call upon Inspector Gubbins of the Shanghai police. He was on his way home from Peking, where he had been summoned by some Chinese officials of high rank to assist them in unravelling a government plot and had not, at least this time, been sent for to assist the officers of the English settlement. It occurred to the inspector, however, that before he left for the south he might be able to help the department in a very practical way by giving them—from a purely Chinese standpoint—the "true inwardness" of some of the prodigies and miracles with the aid of which the various temples were relieving the populace of their hard-earned cash.

"Mr. Wang," he began, "if your steamer passage is not already engaged, we should like very much to have you explain to us something that is taking the attention and the money of hundreds of the natives and is attracting the curiosity of the foreigners, who have heard of it through their house boys and coolies."

"Fortunately, sir, I am in no great hurry and I shall be glad of the few extra days of rest in the settlement.

Let me know how I can have the pleasure of serving you."

"Well, sir, it is a supposed miracle

that has taken place in the Temple of the Sacred White Stag, as they call it, and it's just outside the con-

cession line, so that I can't control it or send my men there to investigate."

"What is the nature of the miracle?"

"I haven't seen it myself, but Morehead looked in there the other day and it seems there is a white stone stag there holding up a Cloisonne vase on his horns and there is a perpetual stream of water flowing from it into a bronze basin, where the priests are bottling it up and selling it to the natives for all kinds of superstitious purposes. The mystery, of course, is where the water comes from. There doesn't appear to be any connection whatever between the vase and the rest of the outfit, and yet it keeps flowing and overflowing all the time."

"This is very interesting," replied the Chinese detective. "Of course, I have heard and seen many so-called miracles in the temples and shrines of the country—and, incidentally, have been obliged, for the protection of my people, to expose not a few of them—but this one is quite new to me. May I ask your secretary to kindly write down the exact location of the Stag Temple? I shall take pleasure in looking it up."

The same evening, Wang Foo, disguised as an unsophisticated countryman, alighted from a wheel-barrow at the south end of the settlement and followed the line of foot-passengers proceeding to the miraculous waters. He found everything as the inspector had described it. There was the figure of the Sacred White Stag; there was the old vase of Cloisonne perched high upon his horns, and, sure enough, there was the overflowing water dropping into the bronze basin below. He waited patiently until the long line of devotees moved on and he was able to get close to the wonder. He reached the surrounding railing about four feet away from the image itself, and here his further progress was barred by the ever patchful priests, who guarded their source of wealth most zealously. He bought a circular describing all the various virtues of the sacred liquid and paid a handsome price for a medium-sized bottle, guaranteed to extinguish with its magic properties any conflagration, however serious.

The closer he looked, the more mar-

velous it all became to him and the deeper was his desire to fathom the mystery. All that he had seen hitherto in other places seemed coarse and commonplace compared with this.

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velous it all became to him and the deeper was his desire to fathom the mystery. All that he had seen hitherto in other places seemed coarse and commonplace compared with this.

Whatever it was, it was certainly very well and skillfully done.

The vase was poised on the very tips of the creature's horns, with no apparent connection with anything around it, and yet the stream of water was evidently flowing steadily through it. All thought of returning to Hongkong was banished from his mind and he resolved to stay in Shanghai until he had unearthed the secret.

A few days after the above visit, Inspector Gubbins received a very cordial invitation from Mr. Wang to join him on a trip to the Temple of the Stag, and, he added: "If you have any European friends who are interested in eastern miracle, please bring them along." The party was duly formed, and included in its number Lieut. Gleason (who, now he had discovered the original source of the magic waters, was more set than ever on purchasing the vase), the British vice-consul and a half a dozen others. They stood in a group in the inner-court and anxiously awaited developments.

The critical moment finally came—Old Nine Spot had just harangued the crowd with a vivid description of the miracle and a rehearsal of the virtues of the waters, when Wang Foo arose, and motioning the assembly to silence, cried out: "I have a special message from the source of the heavenly waters. The spirit of the White Stag bids them cease. It is now—holding up his watch—"five minutes to 9 by the customs time. When the great bell tolls at nine the waters will flow no more!"

Consternation fell on all the assembly. The priests were white with rage. "Heed not the scoffer," they cried. "Who is the child of earth that dares to cross the will of heaven? Ten thousand curses rest upon him!"

"Wait and see! Wait and see!" cried the crowd.

The moments ticked away and the great hands on the customs clock drew nearer and nearer to the fatal hour of 9—suddenly the first stroke of the heavy bell rang out, all eyes turned to the sacred vase, the stream of crystal liquid grew less and less, and when the bell had ceased its tolling, the waters of heaven had ceased to flow!

It took but an instant to transform the temple crowd from a gathering of superstitious worshippers to a perfect mob of infuriated dupes. They broke through the rails, knocked the Cloisonne vase from its perch—just in time for Wang Foo to seize it and hide it

under his robe—dashed the rows of glass bottles to the ground, and picking up the first thing that they could find, beat the priests unmercifully and compelled them to flee for their lives from the temple precincts. The miracle was over and another was added to the long list of frauds with which the simple-hearted people had been deceived.

"But what led you to suspect the connection with the city water works?" asked Lieut. Gleason, as he listened to Mr. Wang's most interesting story.

"Oh, that was very simple," was the modest reply. "I had a bottle of the miracle-water analyzed by the city chemist, and I knew from his report that it could only come from the city pipes. I naturally turned to the nearest point from which they could tap the supply and I found it in the first house in the settlement, which happened to be that of the Eurasian. The old servant responded to my bribe and told me of the midnight meeting and the bargain with the magistrate. It was an interesting line of evidence to follow up from there the various steps by which Johnson made the connection with the city water and buried the long and slender pipes of lead under the roadway and the temple courts, digging the trench with his own hands. The Sacred White Stag was already hollowed out for some previous occasion, so that did not have to be repeated, but, of course, the boring of the horns and of the vase and the fitting of them together took a number of days and some very careful work. The old servant, whom I paid handsomely to turn over the water at exactly 9, played his part so effectively that the multitude were properly impressed and the exposure was fittingly dramatic."

"So I suppose this will forever end the miracle business at the Temple of the Sacred White Stag?"

"Oh, no, not at all; business will simply be suspended along those lines for a year or two and then the people will forget it and a new miracle of a different nature will take place and all will go on merrily as before." "In the meantime, what of the vase of Cloisonne?"

"I pray you accept it as a little memento of the occasion and say, if you wish, that it was the gift of an humble disciple of Confucius, who believed in the teaching of the Master that it was his duty always to undeceive the people."

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From Printer's Apprentice to Cabinet Member

BY JAMES B. MORROW.

TALKING to one another, if no outsider is present, certain male residents of Lynchburg still call him "Pluck" Glass. They may even address him by that name in letters which no one is supposed to read but himself.

Old citizens, they were born and brought up on the banks of the James river. In age, their average may be sixty, or a little over. More than forty years ago they played base ball together. "Pluck" Glass was one of their number.

At the Methodist Sunday school, however, he was spoken of as Carter, as he is today in Washington and elsewhere. The sobriquet was inspirationally conceived and extemporaneously applied. A ball club from a contiguous town was walloping the Lynchburg nine, was hitting the Lynchburg pitcher in a scandalous manner and the Lynchburg outfit and in-field, piling error on error, were foot-sore and dispirited.

* * *

A home run precipitated the crisis. A small man, below normal then and below normal now, red-headed then but gray-haired at present, with fury in his eyes, abandoned second base and bore rapidly toward the bench.

"You can play ball," he shouted, "but I'll show you how to fight."

Scooping up a bat from the ground, he swung it in circles over his head and charged on. The nine from the contiguous town, along with their substitutes, mascot and manager, arose first to a standing posture and then

"He chased them off the field and they jumped the fence," runs the history of the event, as it is yet recounted in those quarters.

"That's what I call pluck," cried a Lynchburg rooter, as he watched the bold assault and ensuing skedaddling. The word was taken up and shouted in chorus. "Pluck!" roared the admiring Lynchburg inhabitants, and that night it was repeated on the streets and in the barber shop.

Its general currency ceased, naturally, in the years that followed. New generations had their heroes and titles of honor and endearment. Among the old boys, however, "Pluck" means courage and comradeship and is spoken and written with a sort of sanctity.

Before proceeding further it should be stated that the law creating the twelve great federal reserve banks was written, for most part, by Carter Glass, then representative in Congress from the sixth district of Virginia, now Secretary of the Treasury, and the former second baseman at Lynchburg. The credit of authorship, however, has been given to others—and accepted by them in the humility and silence that ordinarily are taken to be a reluctant and modest acknowledgment.

But Carter Glass, chairman of the committee on banking and currency in the House of Representatives, prepared the bill, after accepting suggestions that he believed to be sound and workable and managed the passage of the measure through the lower branch of Congress. He has never said that he wrote the bill and never will take that distinction to himself.

This sensitive man, who ridicules "the perennial and ubiquitous demagogic of a certain class of politicians," and smiles at "the amusing rhetorical exhibitions in behalf of the people" and despises "the distempered clatter of theatrical public men," and humorously refers to "the mental exhaust of a few members of Congress," and warns his countrymen "not to lose your direction in any oral fog,"

sat in the House of Representatives for ten years before he made a speech. And there was never a day in the ten years that he could not have taken the floor and addressed his colleagues at length in the best of English and with grace, power and common sense.

Action, however, has always been the big principle of his life. No half-finished projects, like windowless factories or weed-grown fields, line the road over which he has traveled. What he begins he completes with energy and stability of purpose.

* *

He completes it in some manner and then lights the fire and starts the machinery to see how it works. While other men were filling the Congressional Record and the mails, postage free, with their outgoings, anent nothing in particular, measured as to value, Carter Glass was studying the currency question. He read scores of books and thousands of pages of testimony and special reports and obtained an understanding of the methods of banking in foreign countries.

Some day, by the process of seniority, he would be chairman of his committee, and he purposed to be ready for the duty. All authorities said that the currency system of the United States was not only old-fashioned but dangerous. "It lacks elasticity," declared financiers, bankers and business men. They meant that there was no more money in the country when there was great need of it than when the need was usual or less.

To this subject, then, Carter Glass gave his days and many of his nights. After Woodrow Wilson was elected President in 1912, and before he took the office, Carter Glass, a portfolio under his arm, filled with papers, visited him in New Jersey. Returning to Lynchburg, his home, Mr. Glass, having gained the approval of the President-elect, and soon himself to be chairman of the committee on banking and currency, began the work of writing the bill that ultimately became an act of Congress.

Now Mr. Glass is not a banker; he is an editor and a publisher. But as chairman of the committee that prepared the measure he tried, as he said, "to reconcile conflicting views, to compose all friction from whatever source arising, to embody in the bill the technical knowledge of the banker, the wisdom of the philosophers and the rights of the people."

Months were spent on the labor. At last, after long hearings, at which "big bankers and little bankers, merchants and farmers, credit men and text book writers testified," the bill was ready to be discussed on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Every bill in Congress has a manager or defender, who arises and says "This measure provides for so and so." He must be prepared to answer any inquiry that may be made by a friendly or a hostile member. A bill appropriating money, for example, may contain a thousand items. The manager of the bill is required to have knowledge of all the items, that he may fully explain them, on request, to his colleagues.

It was on September 10, 1913, that Carter Glass took the floor in the House of Representatives for the purpose of analyzing and describing the banking bill of which he was the author. He was unused, he said, to addressing Congress, and so he asked that the "continuity of my speech be not interrupted, as the topic is technical." The speech that followed would fill two solid pages of this newspaper.

What is called literature sometimes lacks in power. It may be beautiful, but may have no vigor. Passion often is effeminate. Carter Glass gives a literary finish to all



CARTER GLASS,
Secretary of the Treasury.

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of his infrequent addresses, but they ring with manliness. Therefore he is invariably interesting. This man, whose school days ceased when he was a lad of fourteen, splits none of his infinitives, while his command of language, in its shadings and finer meanings, is not surpassed, if equaled by any one in public life.

Since his September speech of 1913, wherein he revealed his strength and art, his common sense and great fund of knowledge, Mr. Glass has made two other notable addresses. After the passage of his bank bill he resumed his old habit of silence and for two years and six months his voice was unheard in Congress.

Then came the cowardly and contemptible resolution warning American citizens, except at their own peril, against traveling on the armed merchantmen of the nations at war. Mr. Glass was driven to his feet by this monstrous proposal. He not only spoke like a patriot, which was to be expected, but he went into the case, analytically, logically and historically, like a highly trained lawyer.

"There are some things worse than war," he exclaimed. (The United States then was at peace.) "Virginia," he went on to say, "has homes which might be desolated and mothers who might be distressed and sons who might be sacrificed."

"Two of Virginia's boys are my own—stalwart, manly fellows, for either of whom I would die a thousand times—and I would have them hear me say, without a tremor, in the spirit which I hope animates their hearts, that I would rather be pursued through time and eternity by the pitiful apparition of their shattered forms than to see my country dishonored and its flag hauled down in disgrace." These two boys at a later day fought with Pershing's Army in France.

Last February, breaking another long silence, Mr. Glass, in a speech thirteen columns long, spoke on "The Truth About the War Department," which had been attacked by Senator Chamberlain of Oregon, himself a democrat. It was a beautifully constructed speech and an able defense of Mr. Baker, Secretary of War. In

this speech Mr. Glass, calling in the aid of his extraordinary memory, ridiculed Senator Chamberlain's supposed foreknowledge of the war in Europe by saying that if he possessed such knowledge then he knew more than did Ministers Tardieu and Lloyd-George, more than Gens. Scott and Bliss, more than Gens. Pershing and Kuhn.

And knowing it, Glass pointed out, Chamberlain, as chairman of the committee on military affairs in the Senate, had cut down the appropriations for the Army.

Chamberlain had declared that the military establishment, after the war started, had almost stopped functioning.

"Talk about functioning!" Carter Glass said, referring to Chamberlain's vision of the war from afar off. "Here is an instance in which the distinguished Oregon critic of the government functioned the wrong way."

It is the practice of Carter Glass to file in the crannies of his memory details of such acts of his contemporaries as he thinks may be useful on some future occasion. Not discreditable acts or creditable, but acts as they occur, no matter of what character. Perhaps the practice is more automatic than premeditated, and may be, after all, no more than a habit of mind.

Anyway, the acts and facts are not forgotten. Thus during his colloquies in Congress, when past programs are misstated or conduct is misrepresented, he is instantly ready with the truth. He had been an editor and a publisher for a long time before his election to the House of Representatives. Striving against him for his first nomination were two other candidates, one of whom was an orator of much power before Juries and on the stump.

Up to that time Carter Glass had been a writer and not a speaker. The orator promptly challenged him to debate the issues of the day, both men to appear before the same audience, on the same platform and on the same afternoon or evening. The speeches were to be of the same length—say, an hour to a side—the orator suggested, shrewdly, as he figured it out.

The challenge was